ON THE HIGHWAY: A SOCIOLINGUISTIC STUDY OF THE PATROLLING DISCOURSE

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Abstract

It is always interesting to move beyond the classroom walls and apply theory to real life phenomena. Sociolinguistics invites researchers to explore linguistics in our ever-changing modern world.The current research aimed to analyze the discourse of the Punjab Highway Patrolling Police (PHP) to explore the linguistic features used in the department. The data were collected from four Patrolling posts located in the Bahawalpur district. Semi-structured interviews (Annexure) were used for data collection. The collected data were analyzed through thematic analysis and The Speaking model, a framework for analyzing communication, proposed by Sociolinguist Dell Hymes in 1974. The analyzed data suggested that patrolling police officers on duty employed all features of the register, frozen, formal, informal, and consultative in different situations. In wireless communication and in written language, they used formal language and jargon, which are intelligible for all the members and unintelligible for the interlopers. They use jargon on official duty and slang in daily conversation. Patrolling police jargon and slang functions through English, Urdu, and regional languages. Thus, the Patrolling Police Punjab discourse combines diverse languages and diverse sociolinguistic varieties.

Keywords: Sociolinguistics, Register, Jargon, Highway Police, Patrolling Police, Formal and Informal Language, Slang, Linguistic features

INTRODUCTION

The Chief Minister of Punjab (Pakistan) announced the establishment of Patrolling Posts on the highways throughout the Punjab (Pakistan) province on January 8, 2003. 'Initially 450 patrolling posts were sanctioned in two phases. Later on 72 patrolling posts were also recommended. By July 31, 2013, 335 PHP posts had been operationalized while 9 PHP posts are under construction. 9145 constables, 1000 wireless operators and 1000 constables have been recruited. ' (DIG/ PHP).
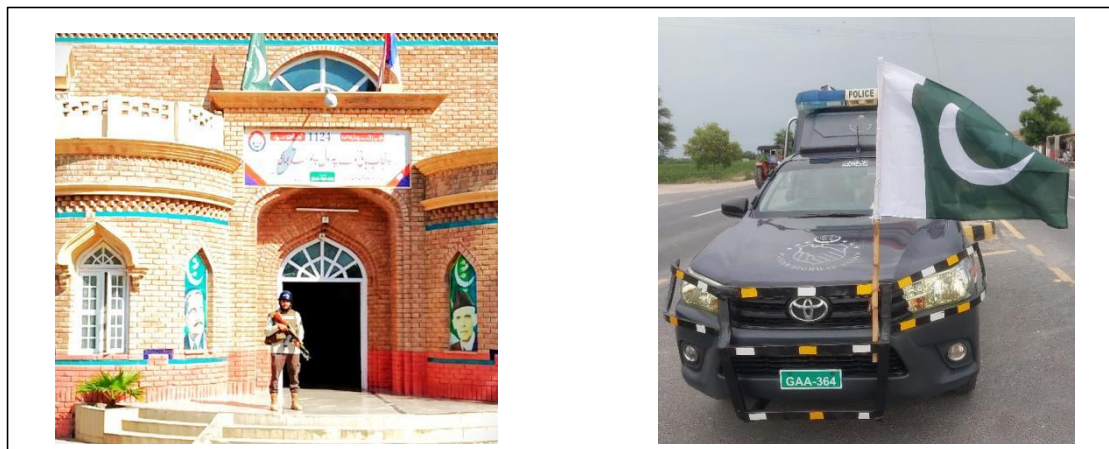
IMAGE 1&2: A PATROLLING POST AND A PATROLLING VEHICLE USED BY PHP IN BAHAWALPUR

The purpose behind these developments was to provide protection to the people traveling on the highways and to improve '*thana (Police station) culture.*' The Patrolling Police plays an important role in facilitating highway traffic in Pakistan However, few studies attempted to focus on their roles. The past researchers did not research the discourse of patrolling police in Pakistan. Therefore, this absence of linguistic work on the patrolling police motivated the researchers to conduct research on the discourse of this department. Let us try to situate the subject of this research theoretically in the field of Sociolinguistics. Liaw et al. (2013) argue that lexical, grammatical, and phonological variations exist in every substantial speech community at any level of the linguistic organization. Social and cultural contexts play a role in these variations. Even though all speakers of a language can easily understand each other, their speaking styles and words vary. In addition to individual variations, the language of one group of people may frequently differ from that of another group of people who speak that language. The speakers, who come from a variety of professional and social backgrounds, use various dialects of the same language. As the social background causes variety in a language, similarly, the professional background also creates variety in a language. Therefore, every profession has different set of lexicon and register which make it unique among linguistic registers of other professions. Likewise, the language or register of medical profession is different from the Engineering, in the same way the language of Army is different from the language of Police. Therefore, even though they speak the same language and live in the same society, the police have different codes.

Police and public interactions are everyday phenomena. Therefore, it is important to understand the communication associated with police. Coulthard & Johnson (2007) argue that understanding the register of police makes us speak like police officers, therefore it is very important to understand the register of police. Because the police speak their own language, their communication is private, specific, and difficult for outsiders to comprehend. According to Hall (2008), the police language they use on the job should not

be thought of as a collection of clichés, formulas, and boilerplate; rather, it should be thought of as the particular set the police use in the context of their work. Chinwe (2010) argues that the police use language in a manner similar to that of other professions. When carrying out actions that involve the maintenance of law and order, the language of the police is utilized. In addition, it is used in ways that both prevent and detect crimes. When protecting the public's lives and property, the police employ language appropriately.

As with other law enforcement agencies, the department of patrolling police uses a variety of languages. It is a new department. The purpose of this study was to investigate the variety of language used in the Punjab Highway Patrolling Police (PHP) by analyzing their discourse. The researchers discuss the discourse of the police patrolling in a variety of settings, including offices and highways and the linguistic features utilized in the given variety of settings. The patrolling police discourse includes the following aspects:

1. Communication through digital devices
2. Telephone and wireless communication
3. Communication between officers and subordinates
4. Communication between Public and patrolling police.
5. Formal and informal Communication
6. Nonverbal Aspects of the Patrolling Police discourse
7. Slang and jargon

The researchers gathered data through interviews in order to analyze these facets.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

This study was a sociolinguistic inquiry into the language varieties of the Punjab Highway Patrolling Police.

RESEARCH QUESTION

What language varieties are used by the Punjab Highway Patrol?

LITERATURE REVIEW

A review of literature on Sociolinguistics helps us come across varieties of linguistic phenomena such as pidgins and creoles, language death, language maintenance and shift, endangered languages, power and language, indigenization of languages, standardized varieties, accents, and idiolects and the list goes on. However, the current research, since it focuses on register and jargon within the patrolling police department, therefore, we confine our discussion to the following:
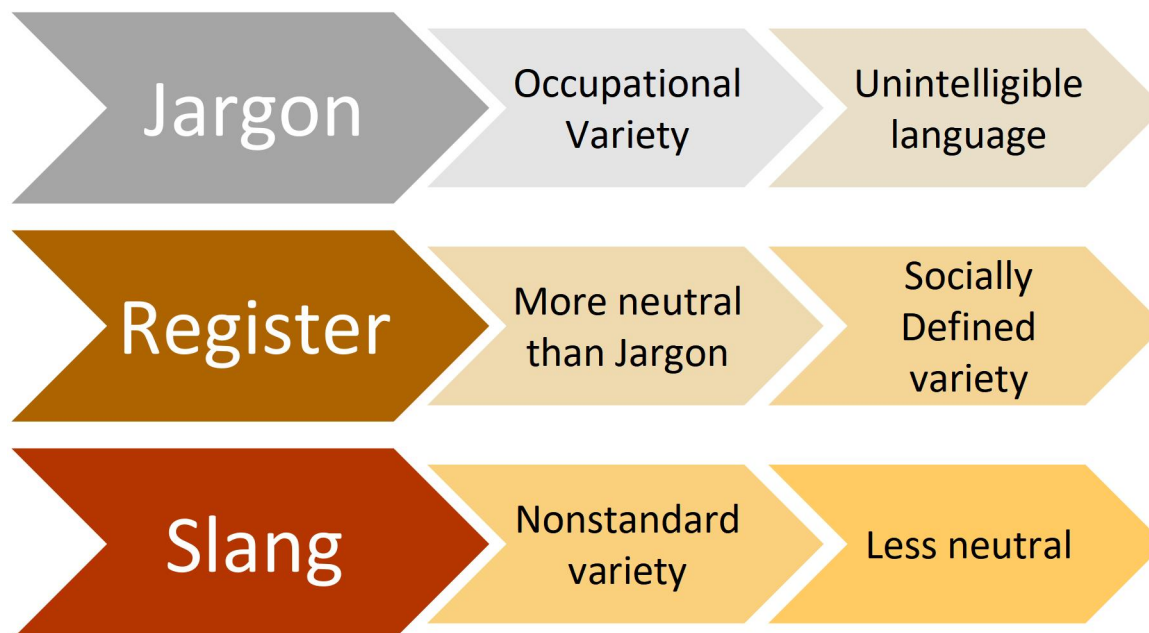
JARGON AND REGISTER

Jargon referred to unintelligible language. Now it refers to the specialized language of a trade, profession or it is called "occupational variety". Liaw. J. et al. (2013) argue that it is common knowledge that the global police force speaks a language that is very unique to them and difficult for non-law enforcement society to comprehend. Nevertheless, if the code of conduct is particularly vivid somewhere, the function of the language becomes much richer. Almost every field of science, profession, trade, or occupation has its own vocabulary, some of which are regarded as jargon. Terms like phonemes, morpheme, case, lexicon, and sentence structure rules are all examples of linguistic jargon. Register is more neutral than jargon. It is a socially defined variety of language, such as scientific or legal English. It is also related to occupation as well and covers the occupation or the same interests. Thus, the patrolling police discourse touches both jargon and register.

SLANG

Slang is related to ungrammatical, nonstandard, less neutral and more informal modes of communication. Liaw. J. et al. (2013) are of the view that slang can be defined as something

that was developed in response to a need. They are of the view that when older words become boring because they have been used so frequently, new words take their place. Aitchison (1998) argues that slang is a language that puts on its coat, spits on its hands, and gets to work. The police are well-known for shortening the full forms of words to create new words, such as "prep" instead of "the perpetrator" and "Ped" for pedestrians. Let us compare the features of these varieties.

Jargon	Occupational Variety	Unintelligible language
Register	More neutral than Jargon	Socially Defined variety
Slang	Nonstandard variety	Less neutral

FIGURE 1. A COMPARISON OF JARGON, REGISTER AND SLANG

As we shall see later, the discourse of the patrolling police employs features of these three varieties. The patrolling discourse at times becomes unintelligible, drifts to nonstandard features of slang and resorts to legal and formal register as well.

Outside Pakistan, there are few researchers who conducted research on law-enforcement agencies, patrolling police and police with different aspects, like Ermasova et al. (2020), conducted research on perceived stress and coping among patrol and non-patrol police officers, Santoso & Apriyanto (2020) carried out researched on Pragmatics implicature-analysis of police interrogation, Momeni (2012) conducted research on linguistic contextualization of police interrogation, and Liaw (2013) explored jargon and slang used by the police officers.

METHODOLOGY

Brown (2006) argues that methodology is the philosophical framework, and the research is conducted accordingly, or the research is the foundation upon which the research is based. The researchers in this study employed qualitative research methodology

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

Bhandari (2020) argues that qualitative research is a scientific method of observation to gather non-numerical data. It is conducted to understand concepts and experiences of people. This type of research "refers to the meanings, concepts, definitions, characteristics, metaphors, symbols, and description of things" and not to their "counts or measures." Thematic analysis and in-depth interviews are related to a qualitative study. Hence the researcher has used the qualitative study to explore the jargon and register of the Patrolling police.

POPULATION AND AREA OF STUDY

The study's primary objective was to investigate the characteristics of the register / jargon utilized by patrolling police in the Bahawalpur district. This implied that all the members of the patrolling police comprised the population of the study. The researcher collected data from PHP employees while staying at PHP posts. As per the demand of the research, first-hand experience of the patrolling police communicated was obtained.

SAMPLING DESIGN

One of the non-probability sampling methods used by the researchers was purposive sampling. A type of non-probability sampling called "the judgment of the researcher chooses elements selected for the sample" is called "purposive sampling." According to Milroy and Gordon (2003), "in most cases, judgment sampling is more appropriate for linguistic work," and they specifically support quota sampling, in which the researcher deliberately focuses on including some pre-determined relevant population characteristics in the sample. Purposive sampling was used for this study based on these assertions and practical considerations.

PARTICIPANTS

The researchers interviewed (20) twenty patrolling police officers to explore the language varieties employed in the department. The Data were collected from four patrolling posts. Five patrolling police officers from each Patrolling post were selected for interviews.

DATA COLLECTION TOOLS / TECHNIQUES

Semi-structured interviews were utilized to collect data. Five patrolling police officers from each Patrolling post located in District Bahawalpur were selected for interviews.

DATA ANALYSIS

In qualitative research, thematic analysis is very often used. Thematic analysis is an introductory qualitative analytic research method. Braun & Clarke (2014) argue that thematic analysis is utilized to analyze, recognize, and describe meaning with the help of themes found in data.

Thematic analysis is a newly established method for data analysis. However, it has historical origins in the older method of content analysis, which dates back to the early twentieth century. Joffe (2011) argues that the thematic analysis uses many of the same principles and procedures as content analysis by categorizing the frequency of occurrences (Joffe, 2011). In the thematic analysis, the researcher plays an active role in identifying patterns and themes. In the current research, themes were analyzed in the context of the given research question. The researchers used an essentialist, or realist method "which reports experiences, meanings and the reality of participants" (Braun & Clarke, 2014) to explore the use of jargon / register in the Patrolling police. Within the data set, patterned responses constituted a theme and reflected "the most salient constellations of meanings present in the data" (Joffe, 2011).

THEMATIC ANALYSIS OF INTERVIEWS

This study sought to find the answer to the research question, "what varieties of language are used by patrolling police?"

Twenty officers were interviewed from the patrolling Posts for the purpose of data collection. Following are the features of the register/ jargon that were found in the data.

THEMATIC PATTERNS OF INTERVIEWS

● Employees of patrolling police are functionally multilingual.
● Formal style with officers
● Use jargon (professional vocabulary)

- Informal style with friends, talk with a friend very frankly, use slang.
- Powerless before officers
- Multilingual in their discourse.
- With public both formal and informal

SUMMARY OF INTERVIEWS

Twenty PHP officers were interviewed, and the following aspects were explored during interviews. Punjab Highway patrolling Police have five areas of communication:

1. Communication on patrolling duty
2. Communication on wireless
3. Communication between officers and sub-ordinates
4. Communication between friends and colleagues
5. Communication with the public.

It was found that they had different styles of speaking in different situations. In spoken language, they had a few specific words (jargon) that they used to make their communication unintelligible for outsiders. While speaking, they used both formal and informal language, but in written language, they only used formal language. In speaking, they used jargon and drifted to slang. When they interacted with their senior officers, they used formal language and avoided confusion and verbosity. But when they interacted with friends and colleagues, they adopted an informal language style and used slang and very informal vocabulary. On patrolling duty, while intermingling with the public, they used both formal and informal language according to the status of people; if there was an educated person, they adopted a formal style, but when they interacted with illiterate people like truck drivers and others, they used informal styles. In written language, they employed words like Imroz(today), Mazhar for head constable, and Amanat for ASI. In spoken language, they used words like roger, nakabandi (blockade) SOS.

JARGON IN WRITTEN LANGUAGE

DAILY DIARY (Roznamcha)

In the patrolling police, a daily diary is a register where all the activities are written on daily basis.

SOS (save our souls)

The Jargon SOS informs about special duty when the police officers check all the suspected people and vehicles. SOS call is an official order given by superiors to detect and prevent crimes from a specific area.

IMROZ (today)

This word was used in the written language which meant present-day when the activity takes place.

MAZHAR

In written language, while writing the Daily diary, this word was used for head constable.

MANN

Mann was used for ASI

SIKANDAR

Sikandar was used for Sub-inspector

TAWAQUF

It meant delay

JURM QABL E DASTANDAZI,

Cognizant crime is a crime where police can arrest the doer without a warrant from the court.

JAI WAQUA
Jai Waqua is a place of crime occurrence.
MAAL E MASROOQA stolen property
SHAKH BAKRI goat and her baby
PARCHA FIR
WILCO
This word was used by a receiver, it meant that the message had been understood and received comprehensively.
INT: INTRODUCTION
CATCH WORD: An accurate group of the message which helped operators in exchanging accuracy was called 'catch the word'.
CODE SIGN: A secret group of words and letters that were used for the identification of headquarters or signal operators.
ROGER: 'ok'. It showed that the message had been received and will be acted upon accordingly.
THE SPEAKING MODEL
Hymes (1974), a sociolinguist, described the Speaking Model, which is ideal for evaluating discourse as a collection of speech occurrences while taking into account the cultural settings. When it comes to the analysis of discourse, including jargon and slang, this model is particularly effective and flexible. Hymes (1986) discusses the true linguistic nature of speech and, consequently, the concepts and procedures that give us the ability to deal with variation. The concepts and methods of linguistic research are derived from the actual use of language in a social context.

This model includes common information on the etymological code just as of the social guidelines, standards, and qualities that direct the lead and translation of discourse. The ethnography of correspondence is associated with the inquiries of what an individual thinks about appropriate examples of language used locally and how the person in question finds out about it (Farah, 1998).

Thus, this model describes a theoretical basis for the study of any language that informs us about linguistic variations from person to person and it also informs about the linguistic coherence across the dominion of society. Moreover, it also offers a methodological framework for investigating communication.
SETTING AND SCENE
The setting is associated with the situation of the speech, where and in which location speech occurs. The scene is associated with context and mood (whether the situation is funny or serious).
PARTICIPANTS
It informs us about the speaker and audience, their background, and their relationship
ENDS
It informs us about the Purposes, outcomes, and goals of the conversation.
ACT SEQUENCE
The form the conversation taking place: verbal or non-verbal. It also tells us about the sequence of the act, first second, and third.
KEY
It tells us about the level of the situation, serious or urgent.

INSTRUMENTALITIES

The instrumentalities include linguistic tools of conversation that make speech possible.

NORMS

These are the norms of the conversation. So, for better communication, you need to understand the culture of the community where you are communicating. Only knowledge of the language is not sufficient, for better communication, you ought to understand the culture of the community you are communicating with.

GENRE

The kind of speech act or event

These terms can be applied to many kinds of discourse. Different disciplines develop terms for kinds of speech acts, and speech communities sometimes have their terms for types. Let us apply these aspects to our subject of the study:

THE SPEAKING MODEL AND THE WORD SIKANDAR

Speech act:	I direct all Sikanders to block the black spot areas to recover stolen car before sunset.
Setting and Scene:	**Time:** 11.00 am place: superintendent of a police office **Psychological setting** – official and serious
Participants:	**Speaker:** Superior officer **Audience**: Subordinate
Ends:	**Purpose**: the direction of the superior officer) **Goal**: recovering a stolen car **Outcome**: blockade (Nakabandi)
Act Sequence:	The form of communication is verbal and directive order from a superior ranking police officer
Key:	Serious and urgent
Instrumentalities:	Authoritarian, language is a linguistic instrument here that is used to tell others to do some act.
Norms	Attention
Genre	Sikandar is a jargon used for Sub-Inspector. In Patrolling police this term is used for the sub-inspector who is in charge of the patrolling post.

TABLE 1. ANALYSIS OF A LEXICAL ITEM 'SIKANDAR' AS PER THE SPEAKING MODEL BY HYMES (1974)

Keeping in view the constraints of space, sharing details of all lexical items in the patrolling police discourse was not possible. One lexical item has been done for example.

DISCUSSION

This research found that patrolling police officials working in the division are multilingual. They communicate in Urdu, Punjabi, Saraiki, and other every single vernacular language. They are educated, however, a few of them speak English. The Patrolling police officers are exceptionally courteous and polite in their conversation. During training, they received

instruction on public manners. The analysis of the data also reveals that these officials along with other varieties of register use jargon and slang during duty. But they use slang and jargon and different aspects of register according to the workplace, and situation they are going through and people they are communicating with. Though these officials speak common languages, they use slang expressions and formal language when communicating each other on wireless communication and when they appear before high ranked officers.

This analysis of the data provides a deep insight into the discourse of patrolling police. Punjab Highway patrolling Police have five domains of communication. They have a different style of speaking in different situations. In spoken language, they have a few specific words, and in speaking, they use both formal and informal language. In written language (roznamcha) they employ words like Imroz(today), Mazhar for head constable, and Amanat for ASI. This department also utilizes signs and symbols to communicate with the public, and they use signs and symbols in the department for the purpose of controlling the flow of traffic. This department mostly uses symbols in traffic management, in parades, when they salute their officers. In traffic management, they control the flow of traffic in the city and out of the city. The mobile education unit (MEU) instructs people about traffic signals, symbols and signs. The patrolling police use two types of digital devices for communication 1- wireless communication and telephonic communication. Mobile phones are used for WhatsApp correspondence. On wireless communication, patrolling police use formal language, jargon and other technical words. In wireless communication, they use code words and signs to make communication furtive and effective. They have specific jargon for officers, alphabets, figures and words. For officers ASI to upward use specific jargon. ASI, they say 'Amanat', sub-inspector 'Sikandar' and 'Khalid' for Inspector. The Urdu language is very compulsory for wireless communication. The wireless operators mostly use the Urdu language. Wireless communication is purely for official use, and irrelevant discussion or communication is prohibited on this channel. Wireless communication is used for official communication only.

CONCLUSION

The data show that patrolling police officers on duty employ all features of a register, frozen, formal, informal, consultative, and intimate in different situations. In wireless communication and in the written language, they use formal language and jargon which are intelligible to all the members and unintelligible to the interlopers. In speech acts, they are sometimes powerful in the speech against their speech participants. When they interact with the public, seem powerful in speech, particularly when they talk to the drivers and other lower-class people. But when they appear before their officers, they seem powerless in speech and as well as in appearance. They are also, mostly, very polite and less powerful in speech when they interact with people belonging to a higher class.

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ANNEXURE

Interview questions for PHP officials

1 Could you speak to your senior officers in a same way you speak to your colleagues?
2 What are specific terms that you use on wireless communication?
3 What type of vocabulary do you use on your daily patrolling duty?
4 Do you have special words in writing roznamcha (daily diary)?
5 What style of language do you use with your friends?
6 What style of language do you use with common people?
8 How do you talk to the people who violate traffic laws?
9 How do you speak when you appear before your senior officers?
10 How do you talk to your sub-ordinates?
11 How do you provide help to public? What is your selection of vocabulary?